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### JRNL 140A.01: Introduction to Radio/Audio Storytelling

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# INTRO TO AUDIO STORYTELLING

JRNL 140A

Don Anderson Hall 316  
 Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:50 pm  
 Instructor: Associate Professor Jule Banville  
[jule.banville@umontana.edu](mailto:jule.banville@umontana.edu)  
 office: DAH 427  
 office phone: 243-2237  
 office hours: Mondays 11-noon, Tuesdays  
 after this class until 3 pm, Fridays 11-noon

## *Course Description*

This course will provide an introduction to the basic concepts of audio as a communication and artistic medium. Students will receive practical experience and knowledge of audio production, including use of sound, recording and microphone handling, digital audio editing and mixing, voicing/narrating, scriptwriting and sound-design. Students are encouraged and expected to incorporate their own creative and aesthetic ideas within the parameters of assignments. Students are also encouraged to create content that could be aired on the student-run station KBGA and posted online at PRX.org and SoundCloud.com. In addition, students will gain practical knowledge of radio, podcasting and the podcasting and radio industries through listening assignments and discussions.

## *Course Objectives*

- To think critically and creatively.
- To learn about the process and techniques of producing, writing and designing audio projects.
- To produce artistic work and solid broadcast journalism.
- To learn and obtain experience working with audio technology and software used by pros.
- To learn and obtain knowledge about the radio and podcasting industries.
- To listen to and discuss critically professional audio work.

## *Textbook*

- Online Tutorial (\$14.99): "Adobe Audition CC: The Beginner's Guide to Adobe Audition"  
[udemy.com/course/adobe-audition/?couponCode=YOUTUBE15](https://www.udemy.com/course/adobe-audition/?couponCode=YOUTUBE15)
- *Tools for Podcasting*, a recently published, free e-book by Jill Olmstead of American University.  
 Access link: [toolsforpodcasting.openbooks.wpengine.com](https://toolsforpodcasting.openbooks.wpengine.com). You'll be assigned various chapters, but won't read the whole book.
- Various assigned articles, provided via links and handouts.

## *Listening Assignments*

You'll be listening to one to three episodes of an assigned podcast *nearly every week* in preparation for discussions led by your peers and by me.

### Equipment

- You'll check out for the semester a Tascam DR-40 recording kit you will share with not more than one other person. If it goes missing or breaks, you will split the cost of a new kit with your partner. You'll fill out forms and receive your kits within the first two weeks of class. To repeat: **You are financially responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged equipment.**
  - Also note: Be careful with all equipment you use either in the studio or in the field. Don't leave any equipment in your car or anywhere it could be stolen. Do not lose your temper and take it out on the equipment. Problems will happen, whether you're at the network level or in college. Everything breaks down eventually. Batteries quit and computers don't always work. Be patient and learn to solve problems on your own.
- You will need to purchase your own compatible SD card, preferable with 16GB memory or more.
- You will also need your own headphones. Cans (over-the-ear headphones) are better for audio than earbuds, but you do you.
- You should also get an adapter if you plan to use your own headphones in the studios. You'll need one that is stereo and connects a mini plug (1/8 inch) to a quarter-inch.

### Studios

We'll go over how to use the J-school's third-floor audio booths and best practices for these shared spaces. You are expected to follow instructions on both. Here's a preview:

- Scheduling: You can sign-up to use one of the production studios for a **maximum of one hour per day** and **three hours per week**. You are not permitted to use the studios for lengthy mixing sessions. They are primarily for recording. Mixing with Adobe Audition or Audacity happens on computers throughout the J-school or on your own laptops. Signups are on a clipboard outside the studio doors.
- You are not permitted to change the settings, including and especially the inputs and outputs.
- Headphones are provided but THEY ARE NOT YOURS. Don't be one of the jerks who steals our headphones. Leave no trace. That also means don't leave behind food, food smells, your jump drives or your superfly sunglasses.

### Access and Security

- **We expect and need you to assist in building security. If you see anything suspicious contact a faculty member or CALL PUBLIC SAFETY!**
- Only Journalism students or those enrolled in this class are allowed to use our studios. It's up to you to help us protect our equipment and facilities.
- After-hours access: Those enrolled as Journalism majors, minors or grad students should have automatic access to the J-school. For students in this class who are not affiliated with Journalism, complete and submit online this form ASAP: <https://tinyurl.com/yyknlggo>

### Grading

- 60%: Major Assignments
- 15%: Minor Assignments
- 10%: Student-Led Discussions

- 15%: Attendance and Participation

### *Major Assignments*

All assignments should be exported out of Audition as an .mp3 file and attached to my email: [jule.banville@umontana.edu](mailto:jule.banville@umontana.edu)

**All assignments should also include a photo or an artistic image that can run alongside your project on the web. Include that in the attachment.**

**Voxpop** (short montage of voices answering one question): You and a partner will turn around two voxpops, one that's serious and one less-so, as a quick first assignment. You may work together to record these and each of you will be the main producer on a finished piece.

Length: 2 minutes each

Deadline: Thursday, 9/4, midnight

**StoryCorps Assignment (The Day That Changed Me)**: You'll produce a non-scripted feature based on interviewing someone about a significant event in his/her/their life.

Length: About 3 minutes

Deadline: TBD

**Common Object**: You'll tell the origin and evolution story of an everyday object we take for granted (examples: the glue stick, ballet shoes, the pasta). The highly researched and reported scripted piece will also make use of music and archival tape.

Length: About 5 minutes

Deadline: TBD

**Five Sounds**: As a class, we'll learn about foley art and artists and then create sound effects in the studio. You'll all create sounds and we'll make those an accessible file. You'll pick five of those sounds and do something hella creative with them (example: fiction story, radio play, real journalism, poetry that's original or poetry published by someone else).

Length: 1-5 minutes

Deadline: TBD

### *Minor Assignments*

Throughout the semester, I'll give you tasks and sometimes quizzes. Tasks can include writing a headline and web copy for your work, finding and sharing examples that are similar to what we're learning, etc. A quiz will be offered when I need to make sure you're doing the listening and reading assignments. All minor assignments are graded accordingly:

You do it: 100%

You don't do it: 0%

### *Student-Led Discussions*

You'll pair up to lead a class discussion about a podcast you choose from a list I provide. Prior to your discussion, the class will listen to one to three episodes from that show. You don't need a formal presentation with slides, although that's acceptable, but you will need to be informed about the show's origin, who produces it, how it's produced and where, how it's

changed/evolved and why it's important in the podcast world. You'll also need to identify and have ready a couple of examples from the show (less than 5 minutes) cued up to play in class to prompt discussion, primarily about the production and technique and writing in those clips. I will help facilitate, but will rely on you to lead. Your grade will be based on your thoughtfulness and preparedness.

### *Attendance and Participation*

How can we have lively discussions and how can I teach you stuff I truly love if you skip class? Showing up and engaging is 15 percent of your grade. If you have to miss, please email me before class about why. Once you miss more than two classes, I'll miss you and be sad and your grade will begin to suffer. Be grownups and come to class and if you have a good reason you can't be there, communicate.

### *Deadlines*

Deadlines are very important in broadcasting. All assignments must be handed in on time. Penalties will be assessed for late work. **Ten percent of the total points will be deducted for each day your project is late.** No assignments will be accepted later than one week after deadline.

### *Diversity Initiative*

The School of Journalism has undertaken an initiative to create opportunities for students to tell stories of varied and diverse groups of people. You will need to integrate one of these groups into one or more of your final audio assignments. We will discuss the groups of people and some possible story ideas during the preparation of the assignments.

### *Academic Honesty*

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at [www.umt.edu/student-affairs/community-standards/default.php](http://www.umt.edu/student-affairs/community-standards/default.php)

### *Same Work for Multiple Classes in J-School*

You may not submit for this course any assignment that has previously or will be concurrently submitted for another class unless you receive prior approval from the professor for this course. To do so without permission will result in an "F" for the assignment and could result in an "F" for the course.

### *Accommodations for Students with Disabilities*

This course is accessible to and usable by otherwise qualified students with disabilities. To request reasonable program modifications, please consult with the instructor. Disability Services for Students will assist the instructor and student in the accommodation process. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at [www.umt.edu/dss/](http://www.umt.edu/dss/).